

AI and the transformation of social science research

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Abstract

Careful bias management and data fidelity are key Advances in artificial intelligence (AI), particularly large language models (LLMs), are substantially affecting social science research. These transformer-based machine-learning models pretrained on vast amounts of text data are increasingly capable of simulating human-like responses and behaviors (1, 2), offering opportunities to test theories and hypotheses about human behavior at great scale and speed. This presents urgent challenges: How can social science research practices be adapted, even reinvented, to harness the power of foundational AI? And how can this be done while ensuring transparent and replicable research?